# CAPTURING THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF THE CITY THROUGH METHODOLOGICAL PRACTICE OF WALKING[1]

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## Introduction

Since the 1990s we have been observing an increasing interest in spatial issues in social sciences, related to noticing space as an important aspect of social life and leading to recognition of its constitutive role in numerous social phenomena (Baur et al. 2014). However, despite a particular eruption of empirical studies using space and spatial concepts as analytical categories, observed since the so-called *spatial turn* in social sciences, the international community of social researchers interested in space still perceives a deficiency – described as painful, ironic and surprising (Gotham 2003; Baur et al. 2014) – of methodological considerations related to it. This article attempts to break the perceived methodological helplessness in discussions related to socio-spatial phenomena, by addressing innovative methodological questions raised by qualitatively oriented urban researchers who have been pushing the limits of our current methodological tool kit in the pursuit of methods that are up to the task of revealing the complexity of contemporary urban experience.

Due to space limitations, my considerations are restricted to those methodological innovations that have developed around the study of everyday life in the contemporary urban environment. My reason for selecting this methodological strand for discussion here is because it addresses one of the most under investigated, and thus urgent, questions concerning spatiality, its experiential dimension (Baur et al. 2014). The leading promoters of current methodological debate in the field of spatial analysis, Nina Baur et al., notice that

> […] while there have been a lot of actual research and methodological developments on how space is imagined, how people interact in space, what relations space [*sic*]

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> have to each other and how people move between spaces, there is surprisingly little research on how space is created, experienced and appropriated […]. Therefore, one focus for future research should be how to methodological [*sic*] grasp these aspects of spatiality (2014: 39).

My intention here is to explore the potential of walking as a research method which appears to be particularly suited for approaching the lived experience of urban space. To develop this discussion, I reflect on the supposed benefits of using walking as a data-generating technique when attempting to investigate urban space as it manifests itself in the practical course of everyday life of city dwellers. Having critically examined the assumptions about the usefulness of walking, I uncover two methodological blind spots which proponents of the walk-along method have failed to successfully engage with. I argue that the walk-along method's capacity to access spatially contextualized lived experience of urban environment remains, thus far, an unfulfilled promise, and examine the possibility of supplementing it with techniques utilized in the emerging field of reflexive methodologies, as well as qualitative GIS approaches in order to ensure that this promise is kept.

## The walk-along method

The walk-along method, also known as a "walking interview" (Jones et al. 2008; Evans, Jones 2011), a "go-along" (Kusenbach 2003; Carpiano 2009), a "video tour" (Pink 2007), a "pedestrian inquiry" (Hall 2009), or simply a "walk" (Trell, van Hoven 2010), is "essentially a hybrid of interviewing and participant observation, with the researcher accompanying informants as they go about their daily routines and asking them questions along the way" (Jones et al. 2008: 3).[3] Deploying this "pedestrian practice" as a data-generating technique means "walking with and video-recording[4] research participants as they experience, tell and show their material, immaterial and social

[3] Although there is a variety of ways in which researchers engage with participants "on the move" and many differences exist in how such engagements are arranged, I purposefully focus on so called "natural go-alongs" (Kusenbach 2003), for this particular variation of the walk-along method raises the most interesting issues about how an existential dimension of urban space may be grasped, and, at the same time, poses significant methodological challenges that I wish to address. For a typology of walking interviews and further indication of the spectrum of approaches that exist see: Evans, Jones 2011.

[4] Video-recording is optional. Sarah Pink, author of a variation of the walk-along method known as a "video tour", argues that "the integration of video into this method can serve as a catalyst for creating ethnographic understandings of other people's experiences, and representing these experiences to a wider audience" (2007: 240), but other scholars suggest that "particularly when the interviewer is trying to film, walk and talk at the same time, this can

environments in personally, socially and culturally specific ways" (Pink 2007: 240). Its implementation as a research tool is based on theoretical premises of the phenomenological approach towards environmental perception and ecological psychology. These can be summed up by Sarah Pink's argument (built on points made by Tim Ingold, Jo Lee Vergunst, John Gray and Katrín Anna Lund) that walking is "fundamental to the way that we both perceive and intervene in our environments" (ibid.: 244), along with a methodological implication derived from this argument, leading to the conclusion that "locomotion, not cognition, must be the starting point for the study of perceptual activity" (Ingold 2004: 331). Thus, proponents of the walk-along method focus on moving beyond the limits of mentalism imposed by approaches which utilize cognition as an analytical category for inquiring into our daily relationships with physical and social environments. They argue that we should aim at exploring not only mental, but also bodily activities that constitute the lived experience of space. They emphasize the importance of studying not simply how others see their everyday surroundings, but how they experience them through the movements of their bodies and different senses, as well as states of emotion, tacit knowledge and implicit skills. It is argued that this approach offers greater insight into the experience of the city and its constitution through ordinary practices of its dwellers.

## The first unfulfilled promise

Comprehensive empirical investigation of lived experience requires access to various sensory modalities, not just the visual, through which an urban environment is experienced, as well as access to the pre-reflective aspects of spatial practices that are fundamental to the way we make sense of our surroundings on a day-to-day basis (Tuan 1975; Thrift 2008), but simultaneously do not lend themselves to narrative accounting (Kusenbach 2003: 462). It is argued that the walk-along method overcomes significant methodological challenges imposed by these elusive but crucial aspects of everyday urban experience by placing researchers "in the mobile habitats of their informants" (ibid.: 478) and enabling them "to observe their informants spatial practices *in situ* while accessing their experiences and interpretations at the same time" (ibid.: 463). This assertion marks the first unfulfilled promise made by proponents of the walk-along method, for accessing another person's consciousness, and thus experience, whilst and through "walking and talking" does not seem to be realisable. There are at least six reasons for this, which I will now

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both distract from the interview process and produce video which is unsteady and disorientating" (Evans, Jones 2011: 851).

briefly comment on, following points made by neurophenomenologist Claire Petitmengin (2006).

Generally speaking, accessing another person's experience relies on his/her awareness of his/her experience, as well as his/her ability to articulate it, wherein becoming aware of one's own experience and describing it is "not a trivial activity, but on the contrary extremely difficult" (Petitmengin 2006: 230). First of all, the difficulties arise from the dispersion of our attention, which makes it very hard to focus on "pure" lived experience, not obscured by our assessments, comments, memories, judgements and other associations prompted by this experience, as well as from the absorption in the objective, which diverts our attention from the lived experience itself (the "how") towards the results to be achieved (the "what"). Another difficulty is rooted in our tendency to "substitute for a description of the experience itself a description of our representation of this experience" (ibid.: 235). This "deforming effect" is accompanied by another one, which holds responsibility for a certain kind of "repression" of those dimensions of our experience that do not match up with our representation of this experience. An additional set of obstacles arises from the lack of awareness of the various dimensions of our lived experiences (visual, auditive, kinesthetic, emotional, etc.) as "the threshold of perception of our physical sensations is usually very high, and we perceive only the most intense emotions, pain and pleasure, with the whole range of more subtle feelings remaining generally unperceived" (ibid.: 236). The last but foremost difficulty – in the context of accessing lived experience whilst walking – is that real-time access is impossible. First, because of the rapidity and complexity of the flow of experience (ibid.: 238). Second, because "it is impossible for us to direct our attention at one and the same time onto the 'what' and the 'how', onto the object of the process and the way in which we carry it out" (ibid.: 238). In fact, in order to access his/her lived experience one needs to live through another lived experience: the act of becoming aware of what he/she had lived through, as explained by cognitive psychologist Pierre Vermersch:

> […] at time t1 the subject carries out a task. He lives through something and this lived experience constitutes an initial point of reference (L1) with reference to what follows. […] the subject, […], tries to describe his lived experience L1. In the course of doing this he lives through another lived experience L2, which enables him to gain access to L1 and to describe what he thereby becomes conscious of (1999: 32–33).

All of this means that becoming aware of one's own lived experience and then sharing it with another person takes a great deal of effort and requires specific circumstances, or appropriate training (Petitmengin 2006).

That is not to say that we, as social researchers, are incapable of studying lived experiences of others. In fact, quite the opposite appears to be true. We are capable of bringing a person "to become aware of his or her subjective experience, and describe it with great precision" (ibid.: 230–231), and thus studying experiences through "first-person accounts" (cf. Varela, Shear 1999; Depraz, Varela, Vermersch 2003), but this requires overcoming all of the above difficulties by means of supplementing the walk-along method with an additional research technique, which I will reflect on in a following section.

Before turning the discussion to the possibilities of enriching the walk--along method, I will introduce another influential approach to studying lived urban experience through placing oneself in the "mobile habitats" of others. Sarah Pink, who developed a variation of the walk-along method known as a "video tour", emphasises the importance of the researcher's own sensory embodied experience as a basis from which to learn empathetically about the experiences of others (Pink 2007). She draws on the premises of ethnography, which is both sensory and reflexive, takes the "whole, sensing self as a route into the experiential" (Pink 2009: 12), and "seeks routes to understanding the experiences and meanings of other people's lives through different variations of being with, and doing things with them" (Pink 2011a: 270). She argues for treating the research walk as a shared experience type of situation, which "involves the researchers empathetic engagement with the practices and places that are important to the people participating in the research" (ibid.: 271). Although she recognises the problem of "sameness" residing within this framing of the research walk, i.e. the naivety of the assumption about the homology between the researchers' and the research participants' lived experiences (Pink 2009), she does not provide the proponents of the walk-along method with a satisfying solution.

Pink's project of empathy as research strategy has raised some objections among other sensory and multimodality scholars. Aside from her assumption about the research participants' awareness of and ability to "share" their experiences, which itself is problematic, as I pointed out above, other important questions have been raised, such as: "How would the researcher 'share' sensations not expressed in terms with which s/he can readily 'empathise'?; Having only our own perceptions and experiences to fall back on, would we not risk imposing them on the other?" (Dicks 2014: 668). Personally, in seeking to understand Pink's strategy for creating empathetic connections to research participants' experiences, I found a lack of specific explanations of exactly how this process works.

Therefore, in a following section I will present alternative ways of approaching sensoriality and reflexivity afforded by the walk-along method that may suit the purpose of building an adequate methodology from the insights

of Pink. First, however, I will tackle yet another unfulfilled promise made by proponents of the walk-along method.

## The second unfulfilled promise

Aside from its capacity for facilitating access to the lived experience of city dwellers, another supposed advantage of the walk-along method, when compared to some of the more traditional research methods, lies in a particular spatial sensitivity afforded by this mode of inquiry. According to proponents of the walk-along method it takes two forms.

First, walking with participants serves as a means of "education" of the researcher's attention, whereby his/her attention is guided by the sets of relevances that govern his/her informants' environmental perception (Kusenbach 2003; Pink 2007). It unveils "the complex layering and filtering of [informants'] perception" (Kusenbach 2003: 466), and thus reveals an urban environment as it presents itself in their lived experiences on a day-to-day basis. By walking with, for example, a person who used to work in a city's department of street lighting, and attuning to his/her set of relevances, researcher starts to notice street lighting and its conditions as a prominent feature of the urban landscape (ibid.: 467–468). Similarly, by accompanying a homeless person as he/she goes about his/her daily routines, the researcher starts to evaluate benches, bushes and alike elements of the surroundings in terms of their potential for being good social gathering or sleeping places (Nóżka, Martini 2015). This particular kind of "trained attention", which creates "the 'visibility' of [spatial] objects but also determine[s] how they are interpreted" (Kusenbach 2003: 468), acquired through "fine-tuning" of "perceptual filters", accounts for the first type of spatial sensitivity afforded by the walk-along method.

A comment made by Hall et al. on the benefits of walking with research participants, points to the second type: "we have felt these walks to be three-way conversations, with interviewee, interviewer and locality engaged in an exchange of ideas; place has been under discussion but, more than this, and crucially, underfoot and all around and as such much more of an active, present participant in the conversation, able to prompt and interject" (2006: 3). The importance of the presence of "walking probes" (de Leon, Cohen 2005) and their capacity for prompting discussions that would probably not otherwise occur is emphasised by a significant number of scholars engaged with "being out there" and "on the move" with research participants. It was also subjected to a test by James Evans and Phil Jones, who actually examined "the qualitative and quantitative differences between data generated by walking and seden-

tary interviews" (2011: 851). Their findings suggest that walking does generate "more place-specific data" than sedentary interviews (ibid.: 856).

Why am I calling, then, the walk-along method's capacity to facilitate the process of gathering spatially contextualized research material an unfulfilled promise? My argument is grounded in the same observation that led Evans and Jones to conduct their methodological experiment in the first place: "a failure by ['walking'] scholars to engage with the methodological and analytical possibilities offered by qualitative GIS" (2012: 92). In 2008, they noticed that "a number of projects making use of walking interviews have made little or no attempt to map the data" (Jones et al. 2008: 4). After nearly a decade of thriving development of qualitative GIS approaches, which have been acclaimed as "one of the most significant analytical and methodological developments within contemporary geography" (Jones, Evans 2012: 97), this claim has not lost its timeliness. The lack of attempts at combining the potential of the walk-along method with the analytic power of GIS means that many spatial characteristics of urban experience remain out of sight of "walking" scholars.

Having identified the missed opportunities for the walk-along method to reach its full potential, I will now discuss a project of a strategy for data generation[5] that aims at overcoming the discussed limitations.

## Enriching the walk-along method

In this section, I wish to propose a strategy for phenomenal, visual and spatial data generation suited for investigation of the city as it manifests itself in the practical course of the everyday life of its dwellers. I wish to bring to light the procedural dimension of the disciplined, methodological practice of walking supplemented with techniques utilized in the emerging field of reflexive methodologies, as well as qualitative GIS approaches. By doing so, I wish to consider a means for ensuring that significant methodological promises made by proponents of the walk-along method are kept.

The proposed strategy draws on my previous research experience, which involved deploying walking as a research tool in several different contexts (Nóżka, Smagacz-Poziemska 2013; Martini 2014; Nóżka, Martini 2015;

[5] In order to avoid falling into the trap of making empty promises, I want to emphasise that the proposed strategy concerns only data generation, not analysis, as developing a concurring analytic framework is still an on-going task for my own research practice and comprises one of the expected outcomes of my research project titled "City as a Lived Experience in a Homeless Situation. A Socio-spatial Study", funded by the National Science Centre, Poland (2016/23/N/HS6/00810).

Perek-Białas 2015), as well as works of other scholars who, although not necessarily preoccupied with walking, provide a means for attaining concurrent goals. The proposed strategy consists of five stages: *contemplation*, *walking*, *explicitation*, *dialogue*, and *mapping*. Each will be addressed below, if only briefly.

## Contemplation

Walking-along can be a challenging undertaking, both physically and cognitively, for the researcher has to simultaneously walk, talk, and observe, as well as perceive (where "perception" is understood as a multisensory, emplaced activity), and, importantly, he/she often has to do so for an extended period of time (see, e.g., Kusenbach 2003; Jirón 2011). Walking-along is also a radically embodied and reflexive research practice, which seeks to take advantage of the researcher's "being out there" and "on the move", considering his/her own lived experience as a basis from which to comprehend lived experiences of others (Pink 2009). For these reasons, I suggest that acts of walking with participants could be preceded by a *contemplation* stage, during which the researcher, as a "perceiving mind-body device" for generating phenomenal data, would prepare him/herself for a complex task that lies ahead.

A growing number of academics, especially those interested in studying consciousness, are recognising the fact that there are epistemic benefits to be gained by incorporating elements of traditional Eastern meditative procedures into the research practice (see, e.g., Varela, Shear 1999; Depraz, Varela, Vermersch 2003; Bentz, Giorgino 2016). They argue that "the existing meditation-related research already indicates that Eastern varieties of meditative procedures should prove to be a useful component of any future science of consciousness" (Shear, Jevning 1999: 190), as well as: "In contrast to the introspective methods usually relied on in modern Western treatments of consciousness, the Eastern procedures in question have the possible advantage of being the products of centuries of effort to develop systematic first-person exploratory methodologies" (ibid.).

Within the context of epistemic goals of walking, meditative procedures may be of use as they heighten sensitivity of perception by means of "neurophysiological conditioning and fine-tuning of the nervous system" (Mare 2016: 313), and create "conditions under which attention can be stabilised in such a way as to make possible an apprehension of subjective experience" (Vermersch 1999: 18).

From an array of meditative procedures at hand, I wish to draw attention to the one designed by neurophenomenologist Christopher E. Mare, because it was purposefully developed as an integral part of "phenomenological walk-

throughs" (Mare 2016: 314) in order to achieve "heightened perceptual acuity" (ibid.: 315). There is no space here to go into the detail of the trajectory of this nine-staged meditative procedure (for a comprehensive description see: Mare 2016), but it can be encapsulated in the following statement:

> The yogic meditation sequence focused on [the] organs of spatial perception with the intention of stimulating them, with the underlying hypothesis being that by locating and visualizing these organs in thought, and then concentrating on their clarification and purification, I could achieve heightened perceptual acuity – where "heightened" is understood as a qualitative increase in awareness as compared to the baseline normalcy of the natural attitude (ibid.: 315).

The procedure draws on the neuroscience of spatial perception, a phenomenological notion of *epoché*, as well as premises and pragmatics of *ashtanga* yoga. It takes some time to master this meditative sequence, but the same is true of any other (research) technique. However, the resulting state of mindfulness, by potentially facilitating the realisation of the walk-along method's premises, seems to justify taking it into consideration.

## Walking

The second stage of the proposed strategy involves accompanying research participants in their typical acts of mobility and participating in their ordinary spatial practices, "as they move through, and interact with, their physical and social environment" (Kusenbach 2003: 463), which indicates that the decision of the routes taken should be made by research participants. The research material should be gathered through audio-recording, GPS-recording, taking and geotagging photographs, as well as the researcher's "emplaced perception" (cf. Pink 2011b).

In terms of "talking whilst walking", it is advisable to take an unstructured approach to mobile interviews. Margarethe Kusenbach expressed the described approach this way:

> I tried giving my informants as little direction as possible with regard to what I would like them to talk about. If they insisted on instructions, I asked them to comment on whatever came to mind while looking at and moving through places and also to share with me what they usually experienced during routine trips. On occasion, I pointed to a nearby feature in the environment that was difficult to overlook and asked my subjects what they thought of, or felt about, this particular object in order to demonstrate what kind of information I was looking for (2003: 467).

Whilst walking, the researcher should follow the flux of the "three-way conversation" (cf. the previous section) and be attentive to the research participants' "perceptual filters" (cf. the previous section).

GPS-recording is crucial for spatialising qualitative data generated while walking, and is thus essential to the last stage of the process, i.e. *mapping*, and as such will be discussed further in a following section. Although it is worth noting here that GPS-recording does not rely on expensive or difficult-to-operate field equipment. In fact, satisfactorily accurate GPS-records might be generated with a GPS-enabled smartphone or a wearable sports-watch style GPS-recorder (Jones, Evans 2012). Moreover, GPS-recording is carried out without overburdening the researcher's attention, as measurements are taken automatically.

Taking geotagged photographs while walking is, on the one hand, a simple, yet methodologically consistent, way of operationalizing the notion of place as a meaningful space (Tuan 1977), where the meaningfulness is indicated by research participants turning their attention to a particular aspect of the surroundings, and, on the other, a means of generating a set of visual data that adds another layer of interpretation to the lived experience of space when approached analytically on the later stages of the investigation (for a review of possible approaches towards the analysis of visual materials see, for example: Rose 2016).

Finally, generating research material through "emplaced perception" – at this stage – means mindfully living through the experience of walking-along, acknowledging "the sensuous interrelationship of body-mind-environment" (Howes 2005: 7 cited by Pink 2011b: 344), and accumulating knowledge of the environment "along the paths of observation" (Ingold 2000: 229 cited by Pink 2011b: 348). The resulting sense of familiarity with the environment, as well as its experiential dimension, are to be transformed into phenomenal data during the next stage, *explicitation*.

## Explicitation

If we wish to make analytical use of the researcher's "emplaced perception", as well as access the lived experiences of research participants, organising an *explicitation* session (cf. Petitmengin-Peugeot 1999; Petitmengin 2006) after an act of walking seems advisable. The explicitation interview technique provides a clear procedure for accessing the phenomenal domain, which – after adaptation – may prove itself useful for "walking" scholars.[6] It is "based upon

[6] It draws on "Husserlian psycho-phenomenology, Piaget's theory of becoming aware, 'affective memory' theories (Ribot, Gusdorf), and the work of James and of Titchener. […] the practices of many psychotherapists who have invented speech acts that can enable another person to become aware of his lived experience and describe it (such as Carl Rogers or Milton Erickson). [A] certain processes of 'Focusing', a psychotherapeutic method created by Gendlin (1962/1997, 1996), whose basic principle is to bring the patient into contact with the dimen-

a mediator whose aim is to help in the unfolding of the internal act making possible access to the lived experience which features as the point of reference and then to guide the process of verbalization" (Vermersch 1999: 35). Since a retrospective verbalisation appears to be our only "gateway" towards the other person's lived experience (cf. the previous section, but also: Vermersch 1999; Petitmengin-Peugeot 1999; Petitmengin 2006), "the quality of this verbalization is what matters, that is, its precision (the density of the description), its completeness relation to a particular object of research, its character as a description – which should minimise the element of interpretation" (Vermersch 1999: 36).

Such a description can be obtained by complying with the rules for conducting an explicitation interview: (1) stabilising one's attention on the experience described; (2) turning the attention from "what" to "how"; (3) moving from a general representations of the experience in question to the description of a singular experience; (4) retrospectively accessing the lived experience through a "re-enactment"; (5) directing attention to the various dimensions of the experience (the diachronic dimension, which can be described in the form of a succession of instants; and the synchronic dimension, which can be described in the form of sensorial registers used, type of attention mobilised, emotional tones, etc.) (cf. Petitmengin 2006: 248); (6) deepening the description to the required level of precision; and (7) putting into words or "overcoming the poverty of our language for describing subjective experience" (ibid.: 253; for detailed description of the respective techniques for guiding the process of verbalisation, as well as validation criteria of the description obtained see ibid.: 239–258).

At this point, it is also advisable to obtain a written description of the researcher's own lived experience of the act of walking with participants through the *autoexplicitation* session.

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sion of subjective experience that is felt through the body, or 'felt meaning'. […] some of the techniques of the Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) 'modelling interview', which helps the interviewee discover the internal cognitive processes or 'strategies' he uses, in order to improve or to appropriate them. […] the highly detailed psycho-phenomenological analyses made by Vermersch (1994/2003) of the various gestures which make it possible to switch from pre-reflective consciousness to reflective consciousness and on the method he has developed, the explicitation interview […]. Lastly, […] the mindfulness practice (*samatha-vipasyana*), a set of meditation techniques derived from Indian Buddhism which initially make it possible to learn how to stabilise one's attention, and then in a second phase to observe the flow of one's subjective experience in order to find out its structure" (Petitmengin 2006: 231–232).

## Dialogue

The introduction of this stage is inspired by Christine S. Davis and Deborah C. Breede's account of "holistic ethnography" (2015), which is

> [...] an ethnographic method of inquiry that is similar to an embodied meditation practice – a conscious awareness of experience in which the researcher intentionally and variously focuses her attention on physical sensations, emotions, contemplation, and dialogue to contribute to deep sensemaking and critical examination (2015: 79).

A modified version of their dialogical approach should allow comparing and examining the researcher's and the research participants' interpretations of the lived experience explicated during the previous stage.

Whereas the goal of *explicitation* is to access "pure" lived experience, *dialogue* aims at deepening the understanding of its meaning, thus bringing researcher and research participants closer to a state in which their experiences can actually be "shared" (cf. Pink 2009) by "co-creating an intersubjective space" (Dicks 2014: 664), which allows for engaging "at a deep level of understanding with each other" (Davis, Breede 2015: 92). Davis and Breede argue that "dialogue is a communicative activity that bridges divides of time and space, culture and experience, thought and emotion" (2015: 92), and as such "dialogic awareness transcends ethnographic understanding" (ibid.).

At this point, all of the elements of the representation of the lived experience, i.e. beliefs, opinions, judgements, interpretations, etc., that had been limited at the previous stage (cf. the previous section), should be dialogically examined, as every "dialogue begins in concrete experience,[7] but doesn't end there. Dialogic relationships move from the embodied to the symbolic" (ibid.).

It is advisable to describe the course of this dialogic encounter and transcribe its content before entering the final stage of generating research material through the enriched form of the walk-along method.

## Mapping

The final stage of the proposed strategy involves integration and visualisation of the generated research material – in the form of textual, visual and spatial data – in order to create a multimodal spatial narrative, which forms a basis for further analytical steps (the description of which is beyond the scope of this article).

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[7] Which, after the *explicitation* stage, the researcher and the research participants are aware of.

*Mapping* the lived experience of the city and its representation may be accomplished in two steps: (1) preparing a "spatial transcript" of the walk-along (cf. Evans, Jones 2011; Jones, Evans 2012); and (2) enriching it with the remaining visual (second-stage), phenomenal (third-stage), and dialogical (fourth-stage) data.

The first step can be executed as follows:

> The audio recordings [are to be] transcribed in a word processor using a table structure, with a column of times representing the position on the [GPS] recording. Each row of the table thus represent[s] 10 s worth of text. […] saving the table of text from the spreadsheet in a tab-delimited format which could be read by a GIS. This file [is] then [to be] connected to the GPS log using a simple "join" function within ArcGIS,[8] linking each point in the conversation to the relevant point in space. […] The [resulting] spatial transcripts [are to be] subsequently exported to Google Maps/Earth using a simple KML conversion program. This produce[s] appealing interactive maps (Evans, Jones 2011: 852).

The second step involves plotting geotagged images on the created map and manually adding selected excerpts from the transcripts of explicitation session(s) and dialogical encounter(s) to relevant points in space.

This procedure enables not only the integration of phenomenal, visual and spatial data, but also brings us closer to Tim Ingold's understanding of mapping as a re-enactment of ordinary wayfinding in an inscriptive gesture (2002), that is, retracing locally situated practices through which people develop their knowledge about their environments on a daily basis, which constitutes one dimension of the constitution of the city through ordinary practices of its dwellers.

## Conclusion

The walk-along method has attracted significant academic attention across the social sciences in recent years (Evans, Jones 2011: 849) thanks to its supposed advantages in facilitating access to lived and spatially contextualised urban experiences. Although a basic form of the walk-along method provides many benefits when compared to some of the more traditional modes of inquiry, such as sedentary interview or participant observation (Kusenbach 2003), its full potential for investigation of the city as it manifests itself in the practical course of everyday life of its dwellers has not yet been reached.

[8] Or within different GIS software, for example, QGIS, which is both open-source and open-access.

In this article, I have tried to lay out the general lines of a strategy for data generation which constitutes the enriched form of the walk-along method and aims at overcoming its limitations. This strategy can certainly be improved upon, but, hopefully, it brings us closer to coming to grips with the methodological challenges, and to taking advantage of the possibilities posed by this innovative mode of urban inquiry.

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